Career Transition Center

George P. Shultz
National Foreign Affairs
Training Center
U.S. Department of State

CTC NEWSLETTER

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"Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence on society."

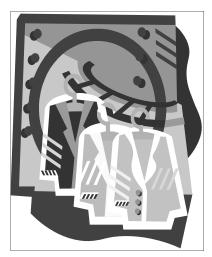
- Mark Twain



SUITING UP

- Prepared by CTC Staff

Robert Half Finance & Accounting recently developed a survey that was addressed to senior company executives and focused on job interviews. When asked how long it took to form an opinion of a job candidate in the initial meeting, the mean response was 10 minutes.



[IMPORTANT NOTE to JSP participants who are ready to stop reading because you are celebrating never having to do a job interview again in your lifetime: go to the Editor's Notes for information on getting rid of your former business clothes. And, no, it does not involve fire.]

The interviewer's first impression usually concerns your appearance. Around age 50, age becomes a significant factor in job searches and – like it or not — the way you look can work for or against you. We Baby Boomers would look pretty silly trying to dress like our 20-something children, but we can make sure that our image has been updated a little since the last time we looked for a job (10, 20, 30 years ago?!?!). The image you want to project is of an experienced professional at the top of your game — sharp, energetic, comfortable with the latest trends and technologies in your field, and eager to face a new challenge.

So, while you are out there updating your resume, consider updating your appearance as well.

Fashion Faux Pas (Actually!) Observed at CTC Job Fairs

If you are doubting the need for an article on personal appearance for our clientele, then read this list of things we have observed (Girl Scout honor!!) at our job fairs:

- Washable suits that have been washed way too many times in bad laundry detergent and, no matter how many times ironed, still looks like it was just worn on an 18 hour flight.
- Suits that don't fit -- especially jackets that cannot be buttoned and pants that are too long, both due to a "little" growth in girth.
- Old-fashioned eyeglasses with big brassy lenses; or reading glasses with half lenses hung on a handicraft chain.
- Battered briefcases, purses, and portfolios that exhibit the popular handicrafts of a foreign country; or, Heaven Forbid, backpacks used as briefcases.
- Exotic hats that only look cool in the outback of some other country.
- Sensible shoes that look like orthopedic shoes worn by aging tourists traveling as a group on a bus through Europe.
- Really bad hair, including the combover for men and the hasn't-beenstyled-in-10-years look for women.
- Men's neckties that don't reach the belt buckle by 4 or more inches.
- Handcrafted belt buckles that rival rodeo prize buckles.
- Exotic, flowing, colorful, ethnic clothing and jewelry.
- Nose and ear hair growing out-ofcontrol (uuuccckkk!).

"I base most of my fashion sense on what doesn't itch."





Getting Started: Buying a Good Interview Suit

Go to more than one reputable store, preferably stores with tailors on staff. Look at a variety of name brands and prices. Always look for an experienced, professional salesperson. Develop your own personal shoppers and ask for their telephone number so you can keep going back to that person whenever you need to buy clothing.

Unfortunately, you are more likely to find a salesperson who will tell you anything to make a sale. So, get a friend to go with you. Some of the things a friend can do to make this a successful shopping trip include:

- Going through your closet with you before the shopping trip to see what you've got to work with and discussing your need for a new interview suit (what styles and colors look best on you, etc.).
- Helping you make the shopping list before the shopping trip and reminding you to stick with it during the trip. (Focus your money and attention on an interview suit not tennis clothes!)
- Telling you the truth in the dressing room and making constructive suggestions.
- Keeping you on task (no taking refuge in the book store!).
- Being the voice of reason throughout

the entire process. (Yes, hot pink looks good on you but it's not a good choice for an interview suit!)

Carrying the bags!

Think "fit" first and always. In her book BRENDA'S WARDROBE COMPANION: A GUIDE TO GETTING DRESSED FROM THE INSIDE OUT, Professional Image Consultant Brenda Kinsel says, "The way you know you're experiencing good fit is that you won't notice fit at all." The measurements in women's clothing sizes, especially, can vary by brand. If the size you usually wear doesn't fill comfortable, try another. Leave your ego at the dressing room door!

When you've found the best fit in a suit you like, but it still doesn't feel 100% right, then ask for a consultation with the store tailor. In addition to other areas you and your friend may have noticed, always ask the tailor to review these areas of the suit with you:

- Shoulders probably the most crucial area to fit
- Pants waist, derriere, and length
- Jacket -- length of the sleeves, sides, and collar

A few years ago, a few female JSP participants banded together to hire the Image Consultant who speaks to our Job Search Programs, Rita Gworek (Image By Rita, www.imagebyrita.com, 703-818-8738). They all modeled their interview suits and Rita made recommendations for each woman. Some were Foreign Service Officers and had had to order their suits by mail from overseas, so they were particularly apprehensive. All the ladies were pleasantly surprised when many of

Rita's recommendations concerned tailoring, not buying newer and more expensive suits and accessories!

"What a strange power there is in clothing."



- Isaac Bashevis Singer

How to Find a Good Tailor

Let's start with some definitions. Alterers, Alteration Seamstresses, & Tailors repair damaged clothing and alter clothing that does not fit and often work in small businesses or laundry and dry cleaning shops. Custom Clothiers, Tailors, & Dressmakers make an entire article of clothing or an outfit, including sewing, fitting, and altering, and may even be involved in designing the article of clothing. Couture Seamstresses are custom clothiers working with a designer to create high fashion or one-of-a-kind clothing.

Professional sewing requires no specific educational degree, certification, or license, so there is no certificate to look for when you enter a tailor's shop. A tailor may have a degree from a university, community college, or technical school in home economics, clothing design, or tailoring, but the proof is in the pudding – or, should we say, stitches.

The best way to find a good tailor is by networking. Happy customers are generally pleased to share the information. If you see an acquaintance in a particularly spiffy suit, you could even ask him or her for a referral. Still no luck? Then check your yellow pages, visit the businesses

and take a look at the tailor's work in each.

Some of the nicer retail stores, such as Nordstrom, Brooks Brothers, and Jos. A. Banks, have tailors onsite, so, if you buy a suit there, you can ask for a consultation with the store tailor. Sometimes these services are free, but, even if not, their rates for alterations are sometimes cheaper than an independent tailor's rates.



"I dress for the image.

Not for myself,
not for the public,
not for fashion,
not for men."

- Marlene Dietrich

How to Find a Good Custom Tailor

If you can't find anything off the rack, decide to have a suit made by a custom tailor, and don't have any referrals, then check these professional associations to find one near you:

- Professional Association of Custom Clothiers - <u>www.paccprofessionals.org</u>
- Custom Tailors & Designers Association of America www.ctda.com

Image Consultant Rita Gworek is a tailor herself. She recommends two local Custom Tailors:

- Tom James in Annandale, VA (703-916-9300) and Columbia, MD (410-290-7955)
- Sofio Barone a Master Tailor in McLean, VA (Sofio's, 703-862-0901)



"Regardless of how you feel inside, always try to look like a winner.
Even if you are behind, a sustained look of control and confidence can give you a mental edge that results in victory."

- Arthur Ashe

Finishing Touches

Don't forget that your interview ensemble will also include shoes and other accessories as well as a portfolio or briefcase. Think conservative, tasteful, comfortable, easy to handle. You want a prospective boss' eyes to go to your face, not your hand-tooled Paraguayan raw leather briefcase.

A good hair cut is absolutely essential for male and female job seekers. You may have been serving in places where it was easiest to grow your hair out and have local "barbers" just cut it in a straight line across the bottom. Well, now it's time to give up the aging hippie look for an update! And, Ladies, this does not mean a \$20 quick cut at a chain salon in the mall! You get what you pay for. Gentlemen, if you are sporting a comb-over, give it up. Foolish and futile is not the image you want to project in your interviews!

If you are also sporting a beard, pay attention to that as well. Check out Steve Hamm's article on "Executive Life: Putting Your Best Beard Forward" in the November 27, 2006 edition of BusinessWeek. The online version even has

a slide show ("Notes from a Beard Whisperer") of beards of the rich and famous: http://www.businessweek.com/print/magazine/content/06_48/b4011102.htm.

Prescription eye glasses are expensive, but you do need to update the styles occasionally. Make sure your frame style – and your lens prescription! -- are up-to-date. And please, please, avoid looking over your half-glasses at the 20-something recruiter and calling him "Son!"

If you've been swilling coffee to maintain those 14 hour work days for the past 20 years, you might also want to consider teeth whitening. Consult with your dentist regarding the best over-the-counter or dentist-administered treatments.

Ladies, if you've never had an appointment with a professional make-up artist or if it has been a decade or more since your last one, you might want to consider an update. There are still no miracles for sale, but there are many new products and techniques to try. Also, as we age, our skin and hair colors may change a little. The colors we use in our cosmetics and clothes may need to change, too. Rita Gworek always cites a study of 500 Human Resources executives by Psychology Professor Judith Waters that showed women who had their makeup applied by a professional for their photo attached to their job application and resume were offered salaries 20% higher than women who did their own makeup.

[NOTE FROM EDITOR: We here in the Career Transition Center do not recommend attaching a photo to your resume. In our opinions, it is a *Huge Big No-No!*]



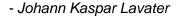








"Dress is an index of your contents."





Feeling Hopeless?

If you don't know where to begin to assess your image before your job search, your new job, your new life, or just for you, there is help out there!

One option is to hire an image consultant who can help you to present yourself professionally. The Association of Image Consultants International (AICI, www.aici.org) encourages you to first define the results you want. These could include assistance with:

- Wardrobe, eyewear and hairstyle, makeup and skin care, color analysis, or overall presentation
- Etiquette and protocol
- Informal communication and formal presentations

For your information, the AICI says that individual consultation fees charged by image consultants vary widely, ranging from \$75 to \$350 per hour.

How do you find an image consultant? Referrals are best (networking again!). They are especially good if you have witnessed the positive changes in the referee's appearance. You can also try the professional association AICI. They offer a directory searchable by state or country.

Some clothing stores offer free or discounted image consulting services. The

Washington Post recently published a great article on personal shoppers and offered a list of local shops with consultants on their website:

"Clothes Encounters" By Suzanne D'Amato

The Washington Post, April 22, 2007, Page M-01

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/19/AR2007041902433.html

"Personal Shopper Resources"
WashingtonPost.com, April 20, 2007
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/20/
AR2007042000740.html

Most of the shops listed on the Post website are national chain stores, so your hometown store may offer the same services.

- Bloomingdale's www.bloomingdales.com
- Lord & Taylor www.lordandtaylor.com Annandale, VA
- Macy's http://www1.macys.com/store/service/mba.jsp
- Neiman Marcus www.neimanmarcus.com
- Nordstrom http:// shop.nordstrom.com/
- Saks Fifth Avenue www.saksfifthavenue.com

You can also search your hometown yellow pages for these terms:

- image consultant
- personal image consultant
- personal shopper
- fashion consultant
- beauty salons and spas

For a consultation on ladies makeup, you

could also look for "makeup artist" (careful it's not for the theater!) or "wedding" services (did you think those brides glowed naturally?!). It is possible to get a free consultation at the cosmetic counter in your favorite high-end department store, but be forewarned that selling cosmetics is that make-up artist's primary function. Other sources for this service are beauty salons and spas.

"Keeping your clothes well pressed will keep you from looking hard pressed"



- Coleman Cox

Amy's Informal, Unscientific Research

<u>Color My Image, Inc. –</u> <u>www.colormyimage.com –</u> <u>Annandale, VA</u>

They call themselves a "full service appearance consulting firm for men and women." Their services include "Color Communication; Makeup and skin care analysis; Eyewear and Hairstyle consultations; Personal Wardrobe design; Positive professional Image projection; and Focused Corporate image seminars." To give you an idea of their prices, they charge \$150 for Color/Make-up Combination, \$75 per hour for figure and wardrobe analysis, \$75 per hour for Closet Evaluation, and \$75 per hour for personal shopping.



<u>Doctor of Dress –</u> <u>www.doctorofdress.com –</u> <u>Washington, DC</u>

The Doctor of Dress is Image Consultant Lynne Glassman. I was referred to her by the Personal Shopper at Nordstrom Tyson Corner. This lady works independently and offers a variety of services. I enjoyed talking with her which is important -- if I'm going to be "made over" the consultant will need to have a sense of humor! She charges \$175 for color analysis, \$70 for face shape analysis, \$150 for silhouette analysis, \$100 per hour for personal shopping, and \$100 per hour for "closet surgery."

Global Image Group – www.globalimagegrp.com - Branch in McLean, VA

First, you take their online survey and then they send you a recommended course of action. I'm in worse shape than I thought because for me they recommend a day and a half of consultations at the price of \$1,800 plus. The consultations include personal style, wardrobe and closet analysis, and personal shopping.

<u>The Image Architect – www.theimagearchitect.com -Norfolk, VA</u>

The architect is Sandy Dumont and she offers a Total Image Makeover workshop for 2 to 15 individuals. If <u>you</u> bring the second person, then the workshop costs \$597 for each of you. Her workshop includes color analysis, makeup, hair style, eyewear, and a clothing evaluation. It lasts from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm or longer, depending on how many suits you bring for the clothing evaluation.

<u>Image by Rita – www.imagebyrita.com -</u> <u>Centerville, VA</u>

Many of you know Rita from her Job Search Program presentation. We always try to schedule her just before lunch or at the end of the day because so many of you stop to talk with her after the presentation. When Rita and a circle of participants get to talking, the competition for resumes and research is awfully tough! Her best selling points for me are that she is a professional tailor and very easy to talk with. For those who have attended her JSP classes, Rita only charges \$100 per hour. Her services include personal shopping, closet evaluations, color analysis, body typing, personal styles, including hair, makeup, eye glasses and accessories, and etiquette.

"Although a life-long fashion dropout,
I have absorbed enough
by reading Harper's Bazaar
while waiting at the dentist's
to have grasped that
the purpose of fashion
is to make A Statement.
My own modest Statement.



discerned by true cognoscenti, is 'Woman Who Wears Clothes So She Won't Be Naked."

- Molly Ivins

One Chance to Make a Good First Impression

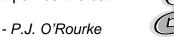
There are also books, websites, friends, and family from whom you can receive free – and, hopefully, good -- advice on your personal image. The Monster Inter-

view Center even has advice on dressing for the interview by industry! (http:// interview.monster.com/articles/ dress codes by industry/) The important thing here is to project a positive image to potential employers. You want them to be dazzled by your brilliance, not your weird hairdo!

There's a lot of truth to the old adage that, when you look sharp, you feel sharp. And, during an interview, you want to feel very sharp! A flattering suit and, for women, makeup will also show a prospective employer that you have not retired, that you are still in the game.

Richard Bolles, author of WHAT COLOR IS YOUR PARACHUTE?, writes that decisions to hire are based more on intuition 2005 and chemistry than anything else. He tells job seekers that they have much less Fryer, Bronwyn and Kirby, Julia than ten minutes to make an impression; he thinks it only takes 30 seconds to two minutes. When you want to be hired into your Dream Job, you are looking for every edge you can find to beat out your competition. You want to give the Dream Employer as many - conscious and unconscious - reasons to hire you as possible!

"Never wear anything that panics the cat."



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Note: This article is for men and even offers a slide show!

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"Avoid the Flip-Flop Flap and Join the
Well-Heeled"
The Washington Post, May 21, 2006,
Page K-01

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/05/20/ AR2006052000416.html

Washingtonian magazine's February 2007 issue is devoted to "Look Good, Fell Good." Articles include "Tips for Great Makeovers," "Spas We Love," "Beauty Products That Really Work," and more.

Some of the information can be accessed on their website at www.washingtonian.com.

"Good clothes open all doors."

- Thomas Fuller



EDITOR'S NOTES

No Longer Dressing for Success?



Never going to wear a suit and/or high heels again?!? Casting them out of your closet once and for all? Instead of a ceremonial bonfire, think about sharing yours with folks who need them.

We are a generous people and U.S. charities receive billions of pounds of used clothing donations every year. Apparently, they can use only half of it. A general rule is that, if you wouldn't give the article of clothing to a friend or family member, then the charity probably won't be able to use it either. Keep that in mind.

To find a charity you can trust, there are several websites with tools you can use:

- Charity Navigator -<u>http://www.charitynavigator.org/</u>
- Better Business Bureau's Give.org www.give.org
- Just Give.org <u>www.justgive.org</u>

Here are a few nonprofit organizations that may be located in your home town

and would welcome some of those stiff suits:

CareerGear - www.careergear.org

- National nonprofit that provides men with interview clothing, job search coaching, and follow-up support to help them get and keep jobs
- They collect new and used interview suits, dress shirts, new shoes, ties, sport coats and jackets, dress trousers and dress casual pants
- Offices located in New York, Miami, and Houston, but donations may be mailed

<u>Dress For Success -</u> www.dressforsuccess.org

- International nonprofit with many affiliates in the U.S., Canada, and New Zealand as well as one in England
- Provides professional attire, a support network, and career development tools to disadvantaged women
- Needs "interview-ready" clothing and accessories (see website for details)

<u>Dress for Success Washington,</u> <u>DC</u> (serves the DC metro area)

- Address: 717 2nd St. NE, Washington. DC 20002
- Telephone: 202-544-3373, ext. 264
- Fax: 202-544-5770
- E-mail: washington@dressforsuccess.org

Inova Fairfax Hospital Treasure Troves - http://www.inova.org/inovapublic.srt/ifh/volunteers/treasure_trove.jsp

- Nonprofit in northern Virginia
- Proceeds benefit Inova Fairfax Hospital programs and services
- Donations (including clothing and accessories) accepted during store

hours only

- For a small annual fee, will also offer consignment arrangements which benefit you (60%) and the hospital (40%)
- See website for locations in McLean, Annandale, and Springfield.

<u>Suited For Change -</u> www.suitedforchange.org

- DC-based nonprofit
 - Address: 1712 I Street, NW, Suite B100, Washington DC 20006-3750
 - ° Telephone: 202-293-0351
 - ° Fax: 202-293-0353
 - ° E-mail: at-

tire@suitedforchange.org

- Provides professional clothing and career education to low-income women who have completed a job readiness program and are now actively looking for a job
- Needs "interview-ready" clothing and accessories (see website for specific items)
- Receives donations by appointment only during certain hours on first Saturday of every month (call or e-mail ahead to make appointment)

"Your business clothes are naturally attracted to staining liquids. This attraction is strongest just before an important meeting."



- Scott Adams

<u>The Women's Alliance - www.thewomensalliance.org</u>

- U.S. nonprofit with many affiliates (in the DC metro area their partner agency is Suited For Change)
- Provides low-income women with the professional attire and career skills coaching needed to make the right impression on job interviews and to succeed in the workplace
- Needs "gently worn" business clothing and accessories

"The body is the shell of the soul, and dress the husk of that shell;



but the husk often tells what the kernel is."

- Anonymous

Fancy Dress for Success

If you still have some Marine Corps ball gowns hanging in the back of your closet, these organizations would love to have them:

<u>Prom Dress Drive - http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com/</u>

- Northern Virginia group that provides prom dresses to teens who cannot afford them
 - Address: Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston, VA 20191
 - ° Telephone: 703-390-6158

° E-mail: <u>rcccon-</u>

tact@fairfaxcounty.gov

 Accepts clean items in good condition and less than 6 years old -- cocktail and evening dresses, shoes, jewelry,

- hand bags, shawls and other accessories
- Donations accepted from January through March

<u>The Princess Project -</u> <u>www.princessproject.org</u>

- National nonprofit that "promotes selfconfidence and individual beauty by providing free prom dresses and accessories to high school girls who cannot otherwise afford them."
- Dresses must be in good condition, less than 5 years old, clean, and on hangers; accessories must be stylish, clean, and in excellent condition

<u>The Priceless Gown Project - http://www.pricelessgownproject.org</u>

- The Princess Project's closest affiliate in the DC metro area
 - Shipping address: 8727 Grape Arbor Way, Odenton, MD 21113
 - E-mail: <u>Priceless-</u> Gowns@aol.com
- See the website for drop-off locations in Baltimore, Towson, Bel Air, and Odenton

<u>The Glass Slipper Project -</u> www.glassslipperproject.org

- Chicago-based nonprofit
 - Address: P.O. Box A-3609, Chicago, IL 60690
 - ° E-mail: <u>gspchi-</u> cago@yahoo.com
 - ° Telephone: 312-409-4139
- Accepts clean dresses and accessories in good condition and less than 5 years old; they also accept unused make-up supplies







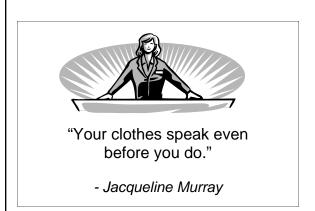






Washington, D.C. - Community Partnership

- The Glass Slipper website lists similar organizations throughout the U.S., but this and The Priceless Gown Project above appear to be the closest to the DC metro area
- Rita Bright 202-483-4547 (Community of Hope)
- Ms. Tenner 202-645-3365 (Ballou High School)



"Those skills have served me well in [the national association] where I have had to set up the office from scratch, make appropriate file folders (both paper and electronic), buy office supplies, do membership mailings and process membership renewals or new memberships (using two different databases and a cumbersome Excel spreadsheet)!

"And that's only the tip of the iceberg baby!"



"You'd be surprised how much it costs to look this cheap."

- Dolly Parton

ATTENTION, JSP GRADS!

Transferable Skills

We received another response to our request for lists of skills transferable from the foreign affairs professions into Real Life professions. These were contributed by a JSP graduate who served as a Foreign Service Office Management Specialist:

"From the OMS side I'd like to add:

- Organizational skills,
- multi-tasking skills,
- very good to excellent knowledge of Word, Outlook, Excel, Access, etc.,
- plus flexibility.

U.S. Department of State Ranks Well In 2007 Best Places to Work

The Partnership for Public Service and American University's Institute for the Study of Public Policy Implementation recently published the 2007 Best Places to Work in the Federal Government in association with US News and World Report. State Department ranked very well:

- #1 among women
- #3 on support for diversity
- #3 on effective leadership
- #3 on performance-based rewards and advancement
- # 4 on teamwork
- #6 overall

To view all the results, go to www.bestplacestowork.org.

Giving Back to Our Communities

According to the Foreign Policy Association, 37% of America's youth can now identify Iraq on a map despite the presence of U.S. troops there since 2003, and only 1 in 10 can locate Afghanistan.

There was a wonderful article in the Los Angeles Times regarding one of your colleagues who is helping to improve this situation: "Former U.S. diplomat interprets Islam: Newly settled in Montana, Dave Grimland tries to balance negative images of the Muslim world" by Sam Howe Verhovek on April 1, 2007.

You can find the article by "googling:"
Los Angeles Times, diplomat, Montana;
or at http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-montanaislam1apr01,1,3825654.story?
track=rss&ctrack=1&cset=true

Many of you are probably doing similar outreach to your communities. If you would like to share your experiences, please send them to your editor at pittsa@state.gov.

"The finest clothing made is a person's skin, but, of course, society demands something more than this."



~ Mark Twain

Share the Smiles!

We will be publishing a collection of jokes and funny quotations in the July newsletter again this year. If you have a joke about any of the following topics, please send them to pittsa@state.gov by June 15, 2007:

- Change
- Transitions
- Job searching (resumes, interviews, negotiating salary and benefits, etc.)
- Aging
- Retirement

Please make sure they are G-rated (or, at most, PG-rated!)! The July 2006 jokes edition was one of the most popular issues of the year, so send us some good ones. We don't want to disappoint!



"Clothes never shut up."

- Susan Brownmiller

JSP Bibliography

The Career Transition Center offers an excellent bibliography for your use on the Internet. You can access it from anywhere you have Internet access.

This year we have added some new sections to the general job search information:

- Company & Industry Information
- Researching Occupations

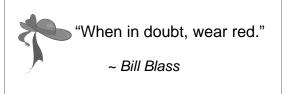
The online version of the JSP Bibliography is more extensive than the version in the your JSP (pink) introductory textbook. The online version includes more targeted job search tools. The new areas added this year include:

- Adventure, Outdoor, & Sports
- Animals & Wildlife

- Contractors, USG
- · Cross-cultural Training & Consulting
- Office Management & Administrative Support
- Think Tanks

To find the comprehensive bibliography go to: www.state.gov/m/fsi/tc/c6958.htm Under "Resources," you will find:

- Articles on the job search
- JSP Bibliography
- "Me in a Nutshell" the "everything my family needs to know if an emergency occurs" document
- these newsletters!



Foreign Language Resources

There are many online and self-study resources available for foreign language learning. Your can find them in many bookstores and from many online booksellers. Most public libraries also have language resources available — some of which can be accessed online on the library's website.

Many public schools systems offer adult education classes in foreign languages at very reasonable prices as do most community colleges.

Some communities have an International House or Center where international clubs meet, citizenship classes are offered, the Sister Cities program is housed, and much more. These centers often have weekly conversation sessions for several foreign languages.



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